

Please call 1-866-invader if you suspect you have found this species

Hydrilla
Hydrilla verticillata

Other common names: Water thyme, Florida elodea, waterweed

USDA symbol: HYVE3
ODA rating: A



Introduction: Hydrilla was discovered in the United States in 1960 at two Florida locations, a canal near Miami and in Crystal River. Since then many east coast rivers are heavily infested. There are large historic outbreaks in California and one infestation in Washington State that has been eradicated. There are no infestations identified in Oregon.

Distribution in Oregon: This species is not yet known to occur in Oregon, but does occur in Washington and California.

Description: *Hydrilla* is a perennial aquatic plant easily misidentified as an *Egeria* species. Growing rapidly in the spring, it remains rooted to the bottom with long stems reaching for water's surface. It can also develop roots from stem nodes, rapidly increasing plant density and providing propagules for dispersal. It can be monoecious (both sexes in flower) or dioecious (either male or female flowers). Leaves are 1/16 to 1/8 inch wide, 1/4 to 3/4 inch long and occur in whorls of five. Small, axillary leaf scales are found next to the stem and inserted at the base of the leaf, a character that distinguishes hydrilla from other family members. The nut-like turions (tubers) are a key identifying and reproductive feature. *Egeria densa* is similar in appearance but has leaves in whorls of four and does not develop turions.

Impacts: Hydrilla is one of the most serious biological threats to aquatic ecosystems in temperate climate zones. Dense stands of hydrilla provide decrease habitat for fish and other wildlife altering water quality by raising pH, decreasing oxygen, and increasing temperature. Dense weed mats create stagnant water providing breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Hydrilla interferes with recreational activities such as swimming, boating, fishing, and water skiing and will clog irrigation ditches and intake pipes. Control programs are expensive and the effects often short-lived.

Biological controls: Biological control agents are not used on "A" listed weeds in Oregon. If this weed is found in the state it will be targeted for eradication or containment. Four approved biological control agents are available for control of hydrilla, but none of them are established in surrounding Pacific Northwest states.

